

WHAT WELL-DRESSED WOMEN WILL WEAR

By ANNE RITTENHOUSE

New French Fashions Proclaim the Conservation of All Materials---There Is a Revival of Grecian Gowns That Cling to the Figure---Chinese Tunics, Sleeves, Embroideries and Tassels Are Rampant---Roman Striping Is Used to Finish Hems---Jackets Are Short

THE new French fashions give us pause. They have a sudden and peculiar interest for us that we did not expect.

There is a Grecian revival of importance. There is the revival of the fashion which was once made so commonplace in this country that it became a joke; the long, straight, corselet frock to the knees, with the pleated flounce headed by a wide sash tied in the back.

There are Chinese clothes galore. Chinese embroideries, sleeves, tassels, galleons and tunics flicker all through the first fashions.

All that we have prophesied in this country concerning the cut-to-the-bone silhouette came true. Paris not only conserves wool, but evidently considers it necessary to conserve all other materials.

There is nothing novel in fabrics, except the Egyptian tissues, the use of exceedingly soft patent leather and a new material that has a Roman stripe in it.

It is not surprising that the weavers went to Italy for some of their color effects and especially drew from Rome and Naples that striped loveliness of color that has always been symbolic of the dress of those two cities.

The French Revolution is represented in the broad, striped silks and other fabrics. Black and white stripes are not as much used as beige and blue, red and blue and gold and cream.

Two months ago it was rumored that satin was commonplace this spring and not to be included in the best clothes. Either the rumor had foundation at the time, which is probable, or it had no foundation and was given to us in America from Paris without thought as to what it would mean in this country. We were all told to discard our satin gowns, and the reporters of fashion sent the idea through the channels of commerce.

As it happens satin is the chief fabric used in Paris for the new gowns, disputing the place with Georgette crepe, Chantilly lace and several weaves of silk net, plain and embroidered.

Back to the Olden Times for Fashions

Possibly the fact of first importance in the frocks that Paris sends to this country is the revival of the kind of frocks which were worn by women in the earlier ages of the world. We say "earlier ages" in an ignorant way when we refer to Greece and Rome, as Professor Osborne might remind us, but those ages are far enough back for us of the twentieth century to be lost in the mist of myth and fable.

The war is carrying us back into some sort of recognition that a tremendous civilization existed so many thousand years ago that we have forgotten it, if we ever recognized it, and the British parade through Palestine, while it reminds us of our Biblical lessons in Sunday school days, takes the students of civilization thousands of years back before the birth of Christ.

To us the revival of Grecian gowns is going very far back into history indeed. To the historian it is a mere scooping backward with outstretched hands to get what lies almost behind us.

The designers in France who went back to Greece took the gowns with which we are most familiar and reproduced them for our every day usage.

The most conspicuous of these show the antique lines to perfection. There is the loose decolletage at the top, caught on the shoulders with buckles; sometimes there is the drapery falling backward from the arms; there is the gold line at the edge of the flowing tunic and the narrow, limp skirt that is longer than most of the others offered for our choice.

We do not think of Grecian costumery in colors; we always visualize it in dead white and gold. But a few of the French designers have used the idea and departed so far from white that one sees mixtures of green and gold and golden embroidery; also that curious gray-green that is called Tanagra, and here and there touches of exceedingly well cut jet.

One of the minor inspirations from the Greek is the constant use of slender gold girdles, and going back further into history there is the twisted cord slightly above the curve of the waistline serving as a belt. It has no ends, it is merely twisted into a loose loop at the side.

Narrower and More Slim Grows the Silhouette

Even the designers who go back into antiquity for their models do not sacrifice the fashionable silhouette, which is slimmer than ever. A few gowns and suits seem to have been cut by the same master hand, or directed by the same master mind. They are identical in idea and they will probably be turned out as uniforms in this country.

Otherwise, there is much novelty in the frocks, and the combination of materials which the conservation of wool demands brings about an appearance of novelty that sometimes does not really exist.

The young generation has grown up made of the same material, and therefore whatever deviates in fashion from that accepted principle is looked upon as a dangerous experiment or as something unique to be instantly accepted.

There is no doubt that the one-piece costume is no longer necessary to fashion or good taste. Danger lies in these piece-meal gowns, of which all writers have warned the public. Yet, the fashion is here and must be reckoned with.

Not only do the designers advance it, but for a curious psychological reason, women have

always liked it. It gives them a sense of cleverness and economy to combine into a costume all the left-overs in the sewing room. They

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EXTREME HAT OF THE SEASON—Hat worn at smart restaurant, made of patent leather with planes of tan isinglass.

BOWS ARE WORN AT THE WRISTS—This new fashion was started by a French actress in a gown of silver brocade veiled with sapphire blue tulle. Double chain of Egyptian beads at neck and Oriental turban of tulle.

FRENCH GOWN IN BLACK AND WHITE CHECKS—Trimmed with fringe of monkey fur. Beret of black patent leather and collar of white corded silk.

YOUNG GIRL'S SUIT OF BLUE GABARDINE—Showing the new coat. Polka-dot tie. Two rows of small gilt buttons on belt.

SMALL HATS HAVE WIDE FRINGES—Black straw and satin, with the edge of its brim outlined with aigrettes. Back is sharply turned up and held with a large rosette.

LITTLE GIRL'S FROCK OF WHITE TAFFETA—Embroidered in turquoise blue, with the new surplice collar forming a sash.

Girdles Are Large and Have Brilliant Embroidered Ends---Coats Are Cut on Severe Mannish or Slim Boyish Lines---Separate Black Satin Coats Are Worn With Skirts of Other Fabrics and Colors---Chantilly Lace Is Again in Fashion---Silhouettes Still Hold

The buyers who are back from the Place Vendôme and the Rue de la Paix say that the theatrical gowns have been extraordinarily good for six weeks.

The new silhouette is accepted by stage folk and exploited by them. All the great dress-makers of Paris have contributed their genius toward making their actresses look alluring and offer seductive and novel gowns to would-be purchasers in the audience.

They play to the American with primitive Indian designs, wooden beads and peaked hats. They play to the English with the bias fasten-

most of it. There are all kinds of hats of it and it is only natural that Paris should not neglect to put it in her beloved tam-o'-shanter.

Whether or not America wears this loose student's cap, France will never give it up. It goes back through the centuries of her artistic, kingly and literary life, and though it may now belong to the students, it really belongs to the world.

The Girlish Gown Calls for More Dieting Than Does Mr. Hoover

It is a pretty question as to whether the French have put out a costume that demands the consistency of a plank shad beneath it because we are compelled to diet for the duration of the war or whether France thinks that every woman wants to look as trim and flat as the doughboys.

There seems to be a general impression abroad over the land that all of us must cut down to fighting trim in our apparel. We are throwing off ballast and receding the sails and lopping off all extraneous curves and swirls and obstacles to successful activity.

Trim Severity Replaces Fluffy Ruffles

Even if women are not driving ambulances, serving as motor car conductors or doing canteen work, they want to appear as though they were trimmed down for fighting just the same. All those beloved feminine touches which men have adored for centuries in women and which have been used by coquettes since clothes were invented to accentuate their femininity have in some measure gone by the board.

It is a question as to whether women are thinking about being coquettish these days, and it is a really serious and deep question as to whether they are thinking about how they appear before men.

This does not mean that they are dowdy or careless. To the sharpened eye women have never looked so well as now. This military spirit becomes them. This clean cut apparel, conserving material to the bone, makes them look fit and fine in a period that has discarded fripperies.

Well, whatever the reason, whether it is diet, activity or the caprice of fashion, the new street clothes from Paris will make every woman sigh to be young and thin. Those short little jackets that reach to the top of a high girdle or the bone of the hip have a schoolboy appearance, and they are not for the woman who has taken on to herself maternal dignity and slow movements.

Red and Blue in Military Combination Govern the Season's Gowns

One of the new gowns that Cheruit sends over is so strikingly like the frocks of over a quarter of a century ago that it brings up the same memories that come from glancing at a family album.

It is of dark blue cloth, that new cloth that is already popular in America and is called Cheruit twill. It has a bit of red at the end of its sash and short collar and lapels of red. And the collar is actually red. There is no modification of it. It is as shrieking as war. It splashes its brilliant surface against the dark blue and accents the entire gown, lifting it out of something commonplace to something unusual and desirable.

Short Sleeves and Surplice Collars On Children's Clothes

The French designers have been paying marked attention to children's clothes. They have departed, in a radical measure, from the kind of juvenile nursery toggery of which American mothers are fond.

Over here we have looked at Parisian costumery for grown-ups with an envious eye, but we have patted ourselves on the back complacently when we compared our juvenile costumery with the kind of things their youngsters wear.

The French juvenile dressing has been true of centuries of sophistication. This has been true of centuries of children's costumery in Europe. We have removed our youngsters far from the stiff and ridiculous clothes of Holbein's days, it is true, but in America the revolution from uncomfortable clothes to loose and hygienic ones has been more pronounced than elsewhere on the planet.

In Comes Taffeta For Young and Old

There is a marked difference in the kinds of materials we allow our children to wear to-day and those that were permissible three years ago.

Take taffeta, for instance. It is a favorite fabric for youngsters now, and the best of the new spring gowns that are sent over from Paris are fashioned of it.

The sketch shows a new gown for an afternoon party, which is made from two pieces of white taffeta cut to fit the neck and top of sleeves and hanging slightly full to a short scalloped hem that is bound with a broad piece of itself. In the centre of each scallop is embroidered a huge figure, done in that cornflower blue which milliners and dressmakers unite in making fashionable this spring.

There is a pocket, of course, but the novelty of the frock lies in its very short sleeves and its surplice collar that ties at the back in a sash. Exactly that collar is worn by adults and those short sleeves have been introduced into fashionable dinner gowns in Paris by women of every age above twenty.

SUIT THAT CARRIES GOLF BALLS—Sport suit of white fibre-silk jersey, with sleeveless blouse turned up at hem to form series of pockets. All edges buttonholed with canary-yellow worsted.

ing on coats and blouses, in imitation of the Sam Brown belt; to the colonials with the Algerian trousers and the Zouave jacket, and to the Scotch troops—the beloved of Paris—with the tufts of black monkey fringe dropping from the belt, in imitation of the sporran of the Gordon Highlanders.

Bullock and Cheruit both use quantities of this monkey fringe in various ways, but as a fringe for a tunic it is a strongly primitive suggestion that the American does not exactly like.

When the monkey fringe is put in bunches to a belt, or at the end of a sash, or used as a tassel on a widely flung three-quarter sleeve, it is likable and effective.

The Scotch Influence Strongly Felt

The gown shown in this sketch received an unusual amount of commendation from our buyers when it was launched at a Paris theatre in February.

It shows the Scotch influence in a marked manner. It is made in the black and white check of the Highlands and the belt is arranged in a series of deep, rounded scallops, each one of which is weighted down by a thick tuft of black monkey fringe.

You will notice that the high-waisted effect is clearly marked out, and there is every evidence that it will grow in favor for all kinds of gowns as the season progresses.

The collar is of white corded silk and argues that we need not wear the high-boned stocks that fashion says are first in favor.

The beret which is worn with this costume is made of soft, black patent leather. This material has sprung up, like Jason's army, within the hour, and the milliners are making the